



THE CYPRUS
INSTITUTE



University
of Cyprus

HOUSED by CHOICE, HOUSED by FORCE - Homes, Conflicts and Conflicting Interests

January 21 – 22. 2016

Architecture_MPS, University of Cyprus; Cyprus Institute

Submit forms to: admin@architectureemps.com

Abstract / Initial Proposal Form:

1. Paper / Proposal Title: Housing in the sand and social inertia; a case study from Saudi Arabia.

2. Format: Written Paper

3. Author(s) Name: 1.Dr. Apostolos Kyriazis 2. Evgenios Balassis 3. Nikolaos Patsavos

4. Email contact details:

1. apostolos.kyriazis@adu.ac.ae

2. eugbal@yahoo.com

3. control.space.gr@gmail.com

5. University or Company Affiliation:

1. Assistant Professor of Architecture, Abu Dhabi University, UAE

2. Architect, MA Cartographic production & Geographic Analysis, PhD candidate, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

3. Architect, co-founder and managing partner of Ctrl_Space Lab, Adjunct Lecturer - University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece

6. Abstract (300 words):

There are many kinds of war. They span from typical military conflicts to socially and politically charged environments, from fiscal colonization to ghostly war about information and the internet. But what about the fear of a possible war? Could housing initiatives be connected to that? What kind of design methods and standards as well as processes would that specific case entail? What other factors would add pressure towards studying and implementing housing projects in this context, and how would those be interfere with the underlying political agenda? What could be the possible measure of their eventual assessment? This paper commences with a hypothesis concerning that fear of a possible spreading of the so-called Arab Spring in the Arab Peninsula, and namely the Saudi Kingdom, triggered a massive state funded housing project. It will be argued that in such a case, where the overall project is basically founded on the dubious ground of political tactics, success is unlikely to happen. Focusing of the ambitious case of Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Housing, the whole argument will be discussed and gradually unfolded within the political, social, cultural, economic and technical-design conditions of such an endeavor, both before its launch-conceptualisation and throughout its implementation. At the end of the day, housing and urban planning stereotypes seem to prevail and justify their title. Paradoxically though, their role in reinforcing social cohesion and political stability is acknowledged and exploited through standardization. Inertia by choice.

7. Author(s) Biography (200 words maximum for all authors):

1. Apostolos Kyriazis (Thessaloniki, 1976) studied Architecture and Urban Planning in Thessaloniki and Volos, Greece. He serves both Academia and the industry in Greece and the Arabic world. His PhD on urban regeneration of dense Greek cities helped on this direction. Abu Dhabi is now his springboard to the area, through Abu Dhabi University.

2. Evgenios Balasis (Thessaloniki, 1973) is an architect, struggling with scales ranging from urban planning to geography. Living and working in Greece, Cyprus and Saudi Arabia, he acquired experience on Master Planning and Town Planning. Yet, isolated areas of low population density, as well as existing agglomerations and unplanned urban neighborhoods are of his favorites to research and study. Politics is his main tool of analysis.

3. Nikolas Patsavos (Athens, 1977), co-founder and managing partner of Ctrl_Space Lab in Athens, has studied architecture in Thessaloniki, the AA and the BSR. He has also been educated in Sociology-Anthropology at Paris V-La Sorbonne. Since 2003, he has been teaching architecture, architectural theory and design in Greece, Cyprus and the UK. His research experience focuses on issues of spatial development strategies and architectural heritage management.